

Health Alert

October 18, 2001

HA#12

**FROM: MAUREEN E. DEMPSEY, M.D.
DIRECTOR****SUBJECT: Update on recommendations for visitors or employees
who were in the Hart Senate buildings on October 15**

The Department of Health and Senior Services is forwarding the following updated information from CDC. Please contact the Department if you have any questions at 1-800-392-0272.

Distributed Via Health Alert Network
October 18, 2001 13:27 EDT (1:27 PM EDT)

Update Update Update Update

Recommendations for visitors or employees who were in the Hart Senate buildings on 10/15/01

(Time expanded to include visitors up to 7pm in the Hart Senate Office Bldg)

People who were on the 5th or 6th floor, SE wing, of the Hart Senate Building, Washington, D.C., between 9am-7pm on October 15, 2001, should receive 60 days of prophylaxis for possible anthrax exposure because it is believed that these individuals were potentially exposed to the bacteria. These individuals should not be given nasal swabs as a preliminary test for exposure to anthrax. Nasal swabs are primarily being used for epidemiological investigation, not for individual diagnosis, prophylaxis, or treatment.

The Capitol Physician's Office has offered to provide the appropriate drug for anyone (staff or visitors) who was in this area on October 15, 2001, during the specified time. The D. C. Department of Health has set up a call center at (202) 442-9196 for treatment information as well as general inquiries. These guidelines may change over the next few days and we will update them as needed based on continuing results. Individuals who were in the specified area of the Hart Senate Building on October 15 between 9am-7pm and are presently in another state/county should contact their state/county health department or CDC for information on treatment.

Studies are ongoing in the capital area to assess whether additional people will need prophylaxis. At the current time there is no indication that additional people who visited other areas of the Hart Senate Building or the capital need to be on prophylaxis or to have nasal swabs.